



City Councilmember

Carl DeMaio

News Release

DeMaio Unveils Tough New Proposals for “San Diego Sunshine Law”

*To Mark National “Sunshine Week,” DeMaio Proposes Laws Expanding
Disclosure on City Finances, Contracts, and Campaign Contributions*

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SAN DIEGO – To mark the beginning of *National Sunshine Week*, Councilmember Carl DeMaio today unveiled a proposal to advance open government reforms at San Diego’s City Hall. DeMaio’s proposal, to be discussed at an upcoming City Council committee meeting, is titled the “Sunshine Act for City Hall.” The proposal would require the City to post all contracts, transactions, pension obligations, proposed city labor contracts, and employee compensation records online.

“It’s time to let the sunshine in at City Hall – by providing the public with more open, transparent information on decisions, payments and transactions,” explained DeMaio. “I’m proposing tough new sunshine laws to provide more transparency on employee compensation, city contracts, campaign contributions, and performance metrics,” DeMaio noted.

DeMaio has been an advocate for increased openness and transparency at City Hall for the last eight years, and has used his office to gather and disclose information to the public about pension payouts, excessive salaries, and other information which would not have been published otherwise.

DeMaio is also proposing that the contents of proposed labor union contracts be disclosed to the public prior to offers being made in city labor negotiations – which are held behind closed doors. “By the time these labor deals are revealed to the public, it is too late to change anything – and state law does not allow the city to back away from parts of tentative deals even if the public demands otherwise,” DeMaio warned. “That’s why we need full transparency for the public on any labor contract terms before our elected officials offer those deals behind closed doors,” DeMaio noted.

DeMaio used the release of his Sunshine Act to point out why transparency has not come easily to City Hall. As recently as this year, DeMaio was informed by city officials that employee compensation data could not be provided which specifically lists salaries, overtime, bonuses, and specialty pay, despite the investment of millions of dollars in the new SAP data management system.

“No one should have to beg for this information – whether they are a member of the public or even a Council member. That’s why I’m calling for San Diego’s very own ‘Sunshine Law’ which will require that this kind of information be made public and posted in a user-friendly online format,” DeMaio continued.

DeMaio has led by example, proactively publishing his city calendar so that the public can see exactly who he is meeting with about city issues since he first took office in 2008.

National Sunshine Week is a national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofits, schools and others interested in the public’s right to know. This non-partisan, non-profit initiative is celebrated in mid-March each year.

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FACT SHEET

“Sunshine Act for City Hall”

Shining a Light on Finances and Decisions in City Government

What the Proposal Would Require

- **Automated Quarterly Disclosure of City Employee Compensation**

Taxpayers have a right to know the details of what city employees and city retirees are getting paid. The Sunshine Act will require timely and complete access to employee compensation information including a breakdown of overtime pay, bonuses, and other payouts. Many cities across the state make this information readily available. There is absolutely no reason that San Diego shouldn't be doing the same.

- **Post All Contracts Online – And Justify Number of Bids Received**

Taxpayers have a right to know who is getting awarded city contracts – and what the terms and conditions of those contracts are. The Sunshine Act will require that all city contracts in excess of \$25,000 be posted in a searchable format on the city's website. In addition, any contractor that has received in excess of \$25,000 cumulative from the city will also be posted with links to all of the contracts they were awarded. Finally, the Mayor will be required to disclose the number of bids received on each contract – and for any sole source contract, a written justification must be provided.

- **Post Performance Results Online**

City taxpayers deserve to know what service levels they receive for their tax dollars. The Sunshine Act will require that each city department post its performance measures online with quarterly updates for the public to track the city's progress.

- **Disclose the Details of Government Labor Union Contracts**

Labor contracts are negotiated behind closed doors – and taxpayers do not know what is agreed to until it is too late. The Sunshine Law would require disclosure of labor contract terms prior to any labor contract proposal being offered by city officials. Once adopted, the Sunshine Act will also require that the City post all current and previous labor union contracts online.

- **Improve Transparency of Campaign Contributions**

The City of San Diego currently requires that candidates running for office report only contributions greater than \$99. The Sunshine Act will amend the municipal code and require candidates to disclose ALL contributions regardless of the amount.

- **Post the City's Checkbook Online**

The public's business should be conducted in public – this principle extends to the city's financial transactions. The Sunshine Act proposes to make the city's financial transactions more transparent and will require that financial reports be posted online.

Councilmember Carl DeMaio has been an advocate for increased openness and transparency at City Hall for the last eight years, and has regularly provided information to the public about pension payouts, excessive salaries, and other information that would not have been published otherwise. The Sunshine Law would formalize this level of transparency – and provide the ongoing legal mandate that it be provided annually to the public.